(b) if so, how many cases have been settled, so far, and the number of pending cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Drug Prices Liabilities Review Committee (DPLRC) was constituted vide Resolution No. 23 (2)/93-PI-1, dated 21st March, 1994 to determine the DPEA liabilities of the drug companies.

(b) 72 cases were referred to Drug Prices Liabilities Review Committee (DPLRC) for its review/determination of liability till the interim stay dated 30.6.1997 was granted by the Hon'ble Bombay High Court in Writ Petition No. 2368/1996 filed by Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA) and Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) restraining the Department and its committees etc., from issuing fresh notices to the drug companies calling for information required for determining liabilities. In totality, out of the 72 cases referred to DPLRC, the Committee submitted its report in respect of 47 cases. At present, there are 25 cases pending with DPLRC because of the Stay granted to Hon'ble Bombay High Court where no quantification can be done till the vacation of the stay. Presently, DPLRC has been kept under suspended animation w.e.f. 31st December, 2005 as no new case could be taken up by the Committee for quantification due to the stay given by the Hon'ble Bombay High Court.

Procurement of foodgrains and storage

3687. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to involve private sector in procurement of foodgrains and its storage;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether FCI is not equipped to take up the responsibility of its own; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) Procurement of foodgrains under Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations is taken up

through the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Goverments procurement agencies. Since KMS 2005-06, on a pilot basis, with a view to make the MSP operations more effective and to increase foodgrains procurement, one private sector company viz. National Collateral Management Services Limited (NCMSL) has been engaged by FCI to procure foodgrains on its behalf.

As regards involvement of private sector in storage of foodgrains, it is submitted that to introduce modern technology, the Govt. had approved the National Policy on Bulk Handling, Storage & Transportation of Foodgrains in June, 2000. Under this Policy, private sector participation has been invited on Build-own-operate (BOO) basis for 5.50 lakh MTs. M/s Adani Exports Ltd. has been notified as the successful bidder and Service Agreement has been executed between FCI and M/s Adani Agri Logistics Ltd. on 28.6.2005.

Special Securities to FCI

3688. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had decided to provide special totalling about Rs. 16,000 crores to the Food Corporation of India for the grain supplied by it;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that above securities would take care of its accumulated outstandings; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) The Government has decided to issue Special Securities to the extent of Rs. 16,200 crore towards the partial settlement of the outstanding dues of the Food Corporation of India till 30.4.2005 in respect of foodgrains supplied to the Ministry of Rural Development for distribution under Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), Special Component of SGRY and National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP).